VISIT…

ROAD TO OBLIVION

An adventure for four 11th-level characters

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INTRODUCTION

Road to Oblivion is a short D&D adventure for four 11th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

This scenario can be incorporated into any style of campaign. It is set in a hidden valley within a high mountain range, so it easily can be placed in a mountainous area of any campaign world.

PREPARATION

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. This adventure also uses the juggernaut, a creature from *Monster Manual II*, but all information from that book that you need to run the adventure has been provided here.

You can place this adventure in any area of your campaign world that features a mountain range in which a hidden valley might exist. Adapt the material given here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

To get started, print out this module. Review the statistics for the various monsters and the description of the Fountain of Oblivion.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Oblivion is a town like no other. Situated in a hidden valley within a high mountain range and accessible only via air or a secret tunnel through the mountains, it has remained unknown to all except its inhabitants for uncounted centuries.

Intelligent creatures of all sorts inhabit the town of Oblivion. Some of the residents are humanoids of the standard races, but many are monsters—often outcasts from their races. These creatures have all come here to forget their past lives—literally—and begin anew. The waters of the River Lethe, the famous underworld river that brings forgetfulness, bubble up from the ground in a spring within the town of Oblivion. All a newcomer need do is drink from the spring, and his past is forgotten forever. The only price for this boon is that the newcomer must stay and live out the rest of his days in blessed Oblivion.

A covey of lillends serves as the town's ruling council and cares for the spring. The lillends mediate any disputes, though few arise in Oblivion because the vast

majority of its inhabitants are good-aligned. Even its monster residents tend toward goodness, a fact that explains their presence here in many cases. Cast out from their societies because of their disruptive attitudes, they eventually found their way to Oblivion, a place where they could forget past conflicts and live in peace with other like-minded creatures. The blessing of the spring's water removes racial animosities as effectively as it does other memories, so the town's citizens have little basis for friction. Several bands of pixies also live in the valley, and though their mischief causes occasional disruptions, life in the valley is by and large peaceful.

As a rule, Oblivion cannot be found except by those with a strong need for its special brand of peace. A creature fervently wishing to forget the past has a vision, or sometimes just a strong urge, to set off along a certain path. Some force unerringly propels the creature along the proper path until it reaches Oblivion. The underground road that leads to the town is well hidden from the normal world, and no one who didn't desire Oblivion has ever found it. Until now.

Five days ago, an earthquake rocked the mountain chain where Oblivion is located. The town sustained some damage, but one section of the mountains sustained much more—the section that housed the underground road to the valley. The earthquake triggered an avalanche that literally decapitated a mountain, sending boulders and chunks of earth the size of houses cascading down its outer slopes. The rubble completely blocked the Oring Road that winds along the mountainside, connecting the small mountain town of Mountain View with the larger town of Oring, which lies below and east of it. The cascading earth also tore away the upper portion of the tunnel that housed the road to Oblivion, leaving it open and in full view of anyone approaching from the direction of Oring.

Mountain View's sole cleric, who ran the town's tiny Temple of Pelor, died a month ago. His replacement, a 10th-level cleric named Damek, was expected to arrive just about the time the earthquake struck. Fearful that their new cleric had been caught in the avalanche, the people of Mountain View tried to dig through the rubble on the roadway from the west, but they were forced to stop because of the danger the unstable pile of earth presented. With no cleric in town, they could not risk massive injuries to the population. So they dispatched two healthy young citizens to Oring via the treacherous mountain slope to get help, but none has yet arrived.

In fact, Damek was not caught in the avalanche. He arrived at the site mere hours after the road had been blocked and searched fruitlessly for a safe way around or over the obstruction. What he found was another road leading toward the interior of the mountain range—the newly uncovered road to Oblivion. Figuring that this road might be an alternate route to Mountain View, he set off along it, unknowingly heading for Oblivion.

But unbeknownst to the residents of Mountain View, the earthquake also created another dire threat on the other side of the mountains. When the top of the mountain came down, it broke open the prison of a terrible creature called a juggernaut that had been buried there eons before. Built by a crazed wizard and set loose on the nearby mountain communities, this horrid construct flattened whole towns in the foothills of the mountain range until a group of adventurers finally neutralized it. Unable to destroy the creature, they resolved to trap it instead. They spent weeks preparing a cave within the mountain, reinforcing its walls with multiple vertical and horizontal *walls of stone* to create a seamless, cubical prison. Then they lured the juggernaut up and over the mountain and into the prepared cave, sacrificing one of their own as bait. Once it was inside, they walled up the entrance with additional *walls of stone* and covered the site with earth, trapping the creature inside. The occasional thumps that the residents of Mountain View have always heard echoing through the mountains were really the attempts of the frustrated construct to knock down its prison, though the townsfolk put them down to a fanciful tale about dwarves playing ninepins.

Now, however, the juggernaut is loose again. Berserk from its long imprisonment, it roared down the mountainside into the hidden valley. After venting its fury on the town of Oblivion once, it went on through the valley, mindlessly seeking to crush those responsible for its long imprisonment. The lillends, the local pixies, and the residents of Oblivion have made occasional sorties against the creature, but they have not yet found a way to destroy it.

One of the large groups of pixies patrolling the valley in search of the juggernaut encountered Damek walking along the road to Oblivion. Upon interrogating him and discovering that he knew some magic, they quickly decided that he might be able to deal with the juggernaut. The pixies resolved to capture Damek and began firing their magical memory loss arrows at him, thinking that if he lost his memory, they could surely convince him to accompany them. Eventually, Damek succumbed to the barrage of arrows, but just then the roar of the juggernaut distracted his attackers.

Not knowing who he was or why he had come, he wandered into the outskirts of Oblivion, where he was assumed to be a new pilgrim who had just partaken of the spring. He settled into Oblivion, enjoying the kindness of its residents, and accepted their explanations that his lost memory was a blessing for which he had sought out this place. He resolved to stay and become their healer, since they had little magical healing available. But the juggernaut is still out there, and it will soon strike again.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Upon arriving at the avalanche site, the characters discover the road to Oblivion. Shortly after they set off in that direction, they encounter a group of pixies trapped in a *forcecage*—victims of the juggernaut. Further on, they discover a troll farmer under attack by bandits who have also decided to try out this never-before-seen roadway. Upon reaching Oblivion itself, they find a town with a wide swath of destruction squarely through its midsection. The juggernaut has struck again while they were en route to town.

During this onslaught, Damek attempted to help the residents fight the creature and was grievously wounded. He was rescued from death under its rollers by citizens of Oblivion. Now the injured Damek is under the care of Gorchuk, Oblivion's best (and only) physician other than Damek himself.

The PCs must find Damek and convince the lillends that his arrival was an accident and that he should be allowed to leave with his memories intact. The lillends' price for allowing his departure is the destruction or reinterment of the juggernaut.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

As DM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. You can use the following adventure hooks to spur your imagination, modifying them as necessary to make them appropriate for the characters' interests.

- While in Oring on other business, the PCs are approached by the two messengers from Mountain View, who inform them of the avalanche and ask them to find the missing cleric. On behalf of the Damek's temple and the town of Mountain View, they offer the characters 15,000 gp to undertake the mission.
- The PCs are in Mountain View when the avalanche occurs. The townsfolk ask them to search for Damek and offer them recompense as above.
- The PCs are traveling along the Oring Road on business of their own from the east and discover the rubble blocking the road. They also see the previously hidden road to Oblivion nearby, just as Damek did.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins when the heroes arrive at the site of the avalanche. Mountain View is a few miles to the east of the blockage, and Oring is to the west and down the slope.

1. AVALANCHE SITE

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters reach the point where the rubble blocks the Oring Road.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Road to Oblivion is designed for a party of four 11th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels. Consider adapting the adventure as follows.

Four 10th-Level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following changes.

- Reduce the number of pixies without class levels in encounter 2 by two.
- Reduce the number of bandits in encounter 3 by one.
- Reduce the number of lillends in encounter 4b by one.

Four 12th-Level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following changes.

- Increase the number of pixies in encounter 2 by four.
- In encounter 3, raise Chovath's fighter level to 7th and give him a +2 weapon. Also, increase the number of bandits by two.
- In encounter 4a, increase Gorchuk's cleric level to 2nd.
- In encounter 5, give the juggernaut an 11th-level drow sorcerer for a "driver."

The Oring Road serves as the sole connecting highway between the thriving town of Oring in the foothills of the mountains and the smaller towns that cling to the slopes to the east. For the most part, it seems reasonably well maintained. But as you round a bend, the road disappears under an immense heap of rubble and loose earth. It looks like an avalanche has recently decapitated the mountain here, burying the road and the lower slope deep under earth and stone. The rubble extends all the way up the slope to the now-ruined mountaintop and for as far as the eye can see downward. Measured from the roadbed, the pile looks to be about 50 feet tall.

If the characters are approaching from the west, continue with the following.

Just before the edge of the rubble heap, a second road joins this one. It leads off to the right, over the new, lower top portion of the mountain. It looks little used but passable. At the juncture of the two roads is a small sign with an arrow pointing down the secondary road. It reads, "Oblivion."

The sign was placed here by the pixies as a joke when they realized that the former access tunnel for the valley was now an exposed road. They have not yet mentioned this situation to the lillends or the inhabitants of Oblivion.

The pile of rubble is 1/4 mile across and very unstable (Climb DC 25). Any character who fails a Climb check falls the distance already climbed and must make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 30) or slide an additional 100 feet down the slope, taking an additional 4d8 points of damage from the sharp rocks and rubble. To climb back to the road thereafter, a character must either climb back up the rubble (Climb DC 25) or move around at least a portion of the avalanche area (1/8 mile) to find a safer spot to climb.

The characters may try to dig through the rubble if desired. Any character standing on the rubble while digging must make a successful Balance check (DC 30) or fall as above. A character armed with any sort of implement that can be used for digging can clear a 5-foot cube in 2 minutes. Clearing six such cubes from any single direction reveals a large fragment of a smooth, stone slab (part of one of the walls of stone used to imprison the juggernaut). Careful examination (Spot DC 20), or a Spellcraft check (DC 15) reveals that it is not natural stone. There is nothing else of interest under the rubble. Clearing the entire blockage from the road by digging requires 20,000 man-hours of work, since the rubble above immediately rolls down to fill any sizable space cleared below it.

When the characters start down the road to Oblivion, go to Encounter 2.

2. PIXIES IN A CAGE (EL 10)

Yesterday, a band of pixies unwise enough to attack the juggernaut openly were imprisoned in a *forcecage* for their trouble. The juggernaut used the windowless cell version of the spell, and the effect, with its prisoners, hangs about 40 feet in the air (out of the construct's reach). Read or paraphrase the following when the characters have traveled about 1/4 mile down the road to Oblivion.

The road on which you have been traveling looks as though it might have been an underground passage until quite recently. The roadbed is made of fairly smooth, unbroken stone—like a cavern floor. Here and there, shards of stone or piles of earth rise up to either side, and sometimes a pile of rubble forces a slight detour. Lichens and patches of mold grow in patches along the roadway, but appear to shrivel in the bright light of the sun, as though unused to the light of day. Once you've traveled about a quarter-mile from the junction with Oring Road, the sound of singing from somewhere ahead catches your ears.

The singing is from the trapped pixies.

Creatures: The leader of this pixie band is Renault, and the singer is Claret. Two other male pixies and two females round out the band. They are waiting for the *forcecage*'s duration to expire or for someone to rescue them. Pixies not being known for their patience, this group has become positively morose after some 24 hours of waiting.

The pixies notice the characters when the latter come within 10 feet. All of them immediately shout for help, and Renault and Claret become visible.

Renault: Male pixie Fighter 2; CR 6; Small fey; HD 1d6 plus 2d10; hp 14; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Atk +6 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger), or +8 ranged (1d6+1/x3, *+1 composite shortbow*); SA special arrows, spell-like abilities; SQ low-light vision, natural invisibility, SR 16; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Concentration +4, Craft (bowmaking) +7, Escape Artist +7, Handle Animal +7,

Heal +5, Hide +11, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Ride +9, Search +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Swim +5; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Far Shot, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Finesse (dagger), Weapon Focus (composite shortbow).

Special Arrows (Ex): Renault employs two types of special arrows.

Memory Loss: An opponent struck by this arrow must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or lose all memory. The subject retains skills, languages, and class abilities, but forgets everything else until he or she receives a *heal* spell or memory restoration with *limited wish, wish,* or *miracle*.

Sleep: Any opponent struck by the arrow, regardless of Hit Dice, must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be affected as though by a *sleep* spell.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*confusion* (the pixie must touch the target), *dancing lights, detect chaos, detect good, detect evil, detect law, detect thoughts, dispel magic, entangle, Otto's irresistible dance, permanent image* (visual and auditory elements only), *polymorph self*. Caster level 8th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Natural Invisibility (Su): Renault remains invisible even when it attacks. This ability is constant, but he can suppress or resume it as a free action.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, *+1 composite shortbow,* 10 memory loss arrows, 10 sleep arrows, *potion of cure light wounds.*

Claret: Male pixie Bard 2; CR 6; Small fey; HD 1d6 plus 2d6; hp 10; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Atk +6 melee (1d4–2/19–20, masterwork dagger), or +7 ranged (1d6–1/x3, *+1 composite shortbow*); SA special arrows, spell-like abilities; SQ bardic knowledge +5, bardic music (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire competence, inspire courage) 2/day, low-light vision, natural invisibility, SR 16; AL NG; SV Fort +0, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 7, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +6, Craft (any) +7, Diplomacy +6, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +6, Heal +6, Hide +13, Intimidate +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Perform +10, Ride +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8; Alertness, Dodge, Martial Weapon Proficiency (composite shortbow), Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Silent Spell, Weapon Finesse (dagger), Weapon Focus (composite shortbow).

Special Arrows (Ex): Claret employs two types of special arrows.

Memory Loss: An opponent struck by this arrow must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or lose all memory. The subject retains skills, languages, and class abilities, but forgets everything else until he or she receives a *heal* spell or memory restoration with *limited wish, wish,* or *miracle*.

Sleep: Any opponent struck by the arrow, regardless of Hit Dice, must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be affected as though by a *sleep* spell.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*confusion* (the pixie must touch the target), *dancing lights, detect chaos, detect good, detect evil, detect law, detect thoughts, dispel magic, entangle, permanent image* (visual and auditory elements only), *polymorph self*. Caster level 8th; save DC 14 + spell level.

Bardic Knowledge: Claret may make a bardic knowledge check with a bonus of +5 to see whether he knows some relevant information about local notable people, legendary items, or noteworthy places.

Bardic Music: Claret can use his song or poetics to produce magical effects on those around him.

Countersong (*Su*)*:* Claret can counter magical effects that depend on sound by making a Perform check for each round of countersong. Any creature within 30 feet of him who is affected by a sonic or language-dependent magical attack may use Claret's Perform check result in place of his or her saving throw if desired. Countersong lasts for 10 rounds.

Fascinate (*Su*)*:* Claret can cause a single creature within 90 feet that can see and hear him to become fascinated with him. The bard's Perform check result is the DC for the opponent's Will save. Any obvious threat breaks the effect. Fascination lasts 2 rounds.

Inspire Competence (*Su*)*:* An ally within 30 ft. who can see and hear Claret gets a +2 competence bonus on skill checks with a particular skill for as long as he can hear the music.

Inspire Courage (*Su*)*:* Allies who can hear Claret receive a +2 morale bonus on saves against charm and fear effects and a +1 morale bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls The effect lasts for 5 rounds after the ally can no longer hear Claret.

Natural Invisibility (Su): Claret remains invisible even when he attacks. This ability is constant, but Claret can suppress or resume it as a free action.

Bard Spells Known (3/1; save DC 14 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, ghost sound, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation*; 1st—*charm person, mage armor.*

Possessions: *+1 composite shortbow,* 10 memory loss arrows, 10 sleep arrows, masterwork dagger, masterwork lute.

Pixies (4): hp 4, 3, 3, 2; see *Monster Manual.*

Tactics: If attacked or if the PCs attempt to leave without releasing them, the pixies pepper the party with memory loss arrows (Will DC 15 negates).

Development: If the characters are willing to converse with them, the pixies beg to be released from this "prison of force" that confines them. In exchange for their freedom, they are willing to answer whatever questions the PCs have to the best of their ability. They can reveal the following pieces of information in response to appropriate questions.

- Oblivion is the name of a town that lies about two miles down the road, in the hidden valley. Lots of strange people live there.
- Their current predicament is the result of their attempt to attack a monster of immense size that has been terrorizing the valley ever since the earthquake. They call it the rolling thunder. It likes to crush its opponents under its huge wheels, but the pixies frustrate it with their speed and their ability to fly. So it cast a spell to imprison them instead and rolled off. They have been in this cage since yesterday about this time.
- The pixies (this group, in fact) put up the sign at the juncture of the roads when they discovered that the avalanche had uncovered the secret tunnel that led to Oblivion. They think it's a pretty good joke, though the lillends will probably be mad when they find out. They don't like just anybody coming to town.

Claret was with the band that attacked Damek, but he doesn't immediately respond to questions about a human traveler, sensing that perhaps he and his companions were mistaken in attempting to capture him. Pointed questions and a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check is required to get him to confess the following information.

> "Well," says the pixie with the lute, with obvious reluctance, "I was with this other band, a bigger one than this, when he came down the road. By himself, he was, and looking around like he didn't know where he was going, you know? Anyway, we called out to him and asked his name and business. 'Damek,' he says, 'and I'm looking for Mountain View. I'm supposed to take over their temple.'
>
> "'Oh, a holy man?' says Chula—she was our leader. 'Do you know anything about the earthquake?'
>
> "'Quite a piece of work,' he says. 'Cut off the road over there completely.'
>
> "Well, about that time Chula decides he might be able to do something about the monster that that earthquake released. So she gives the order and we start shooting—nothing lethal mind you. We just wanted to get his mind off the stupid road, so to speak. Only just when we about had him, the rolling thunder came along, heading for our village. So we had to fly off and warn everybody."

Claret doesn't know what happened to the holy man after that, but he figures that he must have gone one way or the other along the road, so if the characters haven't seen him coming from their direction, then he must have gone on to Oblivion.

If the characters release the pixies (which requires a disintegrate spell), they happily fly off to resume their patrols.

3. THE TROLL AND THE BANDITS (EL 12)

Torvek the troll has a farm just outside of Oblivion. He is one of the town's major suppliers of meat and produce. Having heard the commotion of the juggernaut's attack, Torvek was just heading into town to see if he could render assistance. But he had the misfortune to encounter a group of human bandits who found the unearthed road to Oblivion and decided to see what treasures lay in this direction. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters have traveled a mile and a half down the road to Oblivion.

> The road winds down the other side of the mountain into a sunlit valley. Birds flit everywhere, and the sight of an occasional thatched roof through the trees speaks of a settlement of some sort below.
>
> The noise of a fight comes from somewhere ahead. As you round the bend, you see a troll wearing coveralls locked in deadly combat with four humans wearing leather armor. The troll wields a scythe. A straw hat lies on the ground nearby. Crops reach up toward the sun in a field next to the road.

The PCs must decide which side to aid, if either.

Creatures: The troll is Torvek, a troll who spent his early years raiding with others of his kind until his conscience got the better of him. Desperate to forget his past life, he made his way to Oblivion and took up farming. His fields border the road to Oblivion, and his house, a simple, one-room hut with a thatched roof, is just across the field, about 1/4 mile away.

The bandit leader is Chovath. He and his fellows decided to investigate the newly revealed road and see what profits it might yield. Torvek was the first potential victim they found.

As soon as he sees the PCs, Chovath shouts, "Help us! We've been set upon by an evil troll!" Torvek also cries out for aid, but in Giant, his native tongue. In the heat of combat, he doesn't remember to use Common.

Torvek: Male troll Fighter 3/Expert 3; CR 10; Large giant; HD 6d8+36 plus 3d10+18 plus 3d6+18; hp 125; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Atk +15 melee (1d6+7, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d6+3, bite), or +15/+10 melee (2d4+10/x4, scythe); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA rend 2d6+10; SQ darkvision 60 ft., regeneration 5, scent; AL CG; SV Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 24, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +1, Hide –2, Listen +5, Profession (farmer) +13, Spot +5; Alertness, Cleave, Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Profession [farmer]).

Rend (Ex): If Torvek hits with both claw attacks, he latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+10 points of damage.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to Torvek. If he loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 3d6 minutes. Torvek can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

Scent (Ex): Torvek can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Possessions: Scythe.

Chovath: Male human Fighter 5/Rogue 5; CR 10; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d10+5 plus 5d6+5; hp 54; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 19; Atk +14/+9 melee (1d8+9/19–20, *+1 longsword*); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ traps, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +6, Bluff +9, Climb +8, Diplomacy +1, Disable Device +11, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +1, Jump +8, Move Silently +18, Open Lock +12, Ride (horse) +12, Search +6; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Leadership, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: *+2 silent moves chainmail, +1 longsword, gauntlets of ogre power.*

Bandits (4): Male and female human Rogue 6; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d6+6; hp 27; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/19–20, *+1 short sword*); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, traps, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +11, Balance +14, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +11, Hide +12, Intimidate +11, Jump +3, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +12, Pick Pocket +14, Search +11, Tumble +12; Dodge, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility.

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, a bandit takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Possessions: *+1 leather armor, +1 short sword, potion of invisibility.*

Tactics: If the PCs aid the bandits, the battle should be over relatively quickly. Torvek uses little in the way of strategy; he is fighting a superior force for his property and simply stands his ground as best he can. The bandits try to flank their enemies and use sneak attacks where possible.

Development: If the bandits win their fight, they quickly search Torvek's corpse, then torch his body. Once they have finished their looting, Chovath grins at the PCs and thanks them for the assistance. If the characters' performance in the battle made them appear more competent than the bandits, Chovath offers them each a full share of the loot after they find the creature's lair. If the PCs seemed an even match for the bandits, he offers them a half share each and suggests that they join his merry band in profiting from the highway trade. If the PCs appeared less competent than the bandits, Chovath signals his followers to attack, hoping to increase his haul still more.

If the characters aid Torvek, the fight is more evenly matched. After the bandits have been defeated, read or paraphrase the following aloud.

> The troll takes out a handkerchief and mops his brow, then stoops to pick up the straw hat and places it on his head. "Thank you, friends," he says in Common. "I've never seen bandits on this road before. It's usually very peaceful in the valley. Are you headed for Oblivion?"

Torvek is willing to chat with the PCs at length, though he invites them to accompany him to town if they want to talk, since the folks there will be needing help. Unless told otherwise, he assumes that the PCs have come here because they too wish to forget their pasts and start over in Oblivion. Torvek can tell them the following in response to appropriate questions.

- Oblivion is a small town that has been hidden away in this valley since its founding centuries ago.

- Its residents are creatures of all kinds who have come here to forget their pasts and begin life again. The Ladies, a group of lillends, serve as the caretakers and authority figures in town.
- Torvek cannot remember who he was or where he lived before coming here.
- There have never been any problems with bandits before today. No one can find the hidden valley except through dreams or visions, and those who seek it out are not normally violent. Torvek has no idea how those interlopers found the place.
- A human who wore the symbol of Pelor came this way some days ago. Torvek met him again in town the other day; it looks like he's settled in.
- The juggernaut is a massive stone creature that looks like a house with fists. It appeared in the valley just after the earthquake and has been wreaking havoc here ever since. The Ladies and the townsfolk have been trying to formulate a plan to stop it while rebuilding the sections of town that were damaged in its initial attack.

Torvek can guide them to town if so requested. If told that the hidden access road to Oblivion is now an obvious road, Torvek becomes quite agitated and insists that the Ladies must be told at once. If not prevented, he dashes off at once to take care of that errand.

Treasure: Torvek carries nothing except his scythe. In his house, hidden under the mattress of his bed, are *Murlynd's spoon, dust of appearance, a Huge +1 longsword*, a container of *sovereign glue*, a small sheaf of wheat fashioned from gold (worth 1,000 gp), and 350 gp.

4. OBLIVION AT LAST (EL VARIES)

The road to Oblivion leads directly into the town, which lies two miles from the juncture with the Oring Road. Oblivion is neither walled nor gated, since its guardians (the lillends) have always felt it well enough protected by its secrecy. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters arrive at the outskirts of the town proper.

> At the base of the valley, the road leads into a small town. A sign affixed to a post at the edge of the community reads, "Welcome to Oblivion. Leave your cares behind." Beyond the sign, a fountain sends water cascading into a round stone basin that bears an inscription of some sort.
>
> Just past the fountain, a swath of destruction cuts through the town, angling across the road.

> The homes within this 10-foot-wide path have been flattened, and debris and rubble is strewn everywhere. An ogre, a drow, and a human seem to be assessing the situation, and the drow is making notes on a piece of paper. From somewhere in the distance comes a periodic crashing sound.

The crashing is from the juggernaut rampaging across the valley; see encounter 5.

The fountain houses the natural spring that brings blessed forgetfulness to new arrivals. The inscription reads, "Drink deeply and leave your cares behind."

The citizens of Oblivion are assessing the damage to their town even as the lillends meet with leading citizens to find a way of stopping the juggernaut. Thus far, they have attempted to ward off further attacks by digging trenches outside the town, but the monster simply covered them with *walls of force* and rolled right over them. So not only is the town still subject to attack, but the monster is also wreaking havoc on the natural areas of the valley, where the pixies and other creatures live—a fact that tears at the heart of the lillends. Thus, the folk of Oblivion are seeking a means of destroying the creature completely, but so far they have come up with no good ideas.

Creatures: The ogre, drow, and human are members of a work party formed to begin rebuilding the damaged structures in town.

Ogre: 26 hp; see *Monster Manual*.

Drow Warrior 1: 5 hp; see *Monster Manual*.

Human Commoner 1: 3 hp; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: If attacked, the workers flee, calling for aid as they go. The lillends respond to the call within 2d4 minutes (see encounter 4b).

Development: The workers can direct the characters to anyone they wish to see in the city. If asked about the Damek, they know of no citizen with such a name, though a new human resident was injured in the attack that took place moments ago and delivered to the house of Gorchuk the physician along with the other wounded. The workers are rebuilding a house that was destroyed in the juggernaut's first attack. They have several more on their waiting list.

Fountain of Oblivion: The water from this fountain brings forgetfulness. The imbiber retains skills, feats, languages, and class abilities, but forgets everything else. Anyone imbibing the water against his

will or without knowledge of its effects may attempt a Fortitude saving throw (DC 35) to resist. Only a *wish* or *miracle* spell can reverse the effects of this water.

Once removed from the basin, the water loses its potency. The Fortitude save DC drops to 15, and a *heal* or *limited wish* spell can reverse the effect if the water is not consumed directly from the spring.

4A. GORCHUK'S OFFICE (EL 14)

The beholder Gorchuk serves as the town's physician. He has been tending Damek and others injured in the attack. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters arrive at Gorchuk's house.

> A sign outside a two-story wooden structure with a thatched roof reads, "Gorchuk, Physician and Apothecary. Please ring the bell and wait." Through the windows, a large room lined with bookshelves and furnished with long tables is visible. A spherical creature with a gaping mouth, a great central eye, and about a dozen smaller eyes set on writhing stalks floats in the air above one of the tables, on which a human male lies supine, his body covered with bandages and splotches of green. The floating creature wears a lens over one of its eyestalks, supported by a metal frame that fits around its spherical body, and its central eye is closed. A beam from the lensed eyestalk shoots forth and strikes the human's body as you watch.

The man on the table is Damek. During its long imprisonment, the juggernaut acquired a coating of green slime. Its excursions in the sunlight have killed all but the patches on its underside and the portions of its fists that have remained out of the sunlight. But Damek was unlucky enough to come into contact with the stuff. Gorchuk is now using his *disintegrate* ray to excise the slime-infected bits of flesh from Damek. Once he has done this, Gorchuk will use his staff to heal the resulting injuries. The lens he wears gives him a +3 bonus on attacks with any eye ray.

Creatures: Gorchuk was good-aligned from birth but tried to hide his unusual attitude from his fellow beholders. Eventually, however, he grew tired of trying to hide his attitude and morose because of the evil acts he had allowed to occur. When a vision came to him of a place where he could forget and begin again, he eagerly set off for Oblivion.

Gorchuk: Male beholder Cleric 1; CR 14; Large aberration; HD 11d8+11 plus 1d8+1; hp 66; Init +4; Spd 5 ft., fly 20 ft. (good); AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; Atk +7 ranged touch (by ray, 3 eye rays) and +2 melee (2d4, bite); SA eye rays, turn undead 5/day; SQ all-around vision, antimagic cone, darkvision 60 ft., flight; AL LG; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +14; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Heal +8, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +16, Search +18, Spot +21; Alertness, Combat Casting, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Shot On The Run.

Eye Rays (Su): Each of Gorchuk's ten small eyes can produce a magical ray once per round, even when he is attacking physically or moving at full speed. He can easily aim all ten eyes upward but his own body tends to get in the way when he tries to aim the rays in other directions. During a round, he can aim only three eye rays at targets in any one arc other than up. The remaining eyes must aim at targets in other arcs or not at all. Gorchuk can tilt and pan his body each round to change which rays it can bring to bear in an arc. Each eye's effect resembles a spell cast by a 13th-level sorcerer but follows the rules for a ray. All rays have a range of 150 feet and a save DC of 18. His eye rays are *charm monster, charm person, disintegrate, fear, finger of death, flesh to stone, inflict moderate wounds, sleep, slow,* and *telekinesis.*

All-Around Vision (Ex): Because of his many eyes, Gorchuk gains a +4 racial bonus on Search and Spot checks, and he can't be flanked.

Antimagic Cone (Su): Gorchuk's single eye continually produces a 150-foot antimagic cone extending straight ahead from his front. This effect functions just like *antimagic field* (caster level 13th). All magical and supernatural powers and effects within the cone are suppressed—even Gorchuk's own eye rays. Once per round during his turn, Gorchuk decides which way he will face and whether his antimagic cone is active or not. (He can deactivate it by closing his central eye.)

Flight (Ex): Gorchuk's body is naturally buoyant. This buoyancy allows him to fly as the spell, as a free action, at a speed of 20 feet. He also gains a permanent feather fall effect with personal range.

Cleric Spells Prepared (3/3; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect poison;* 1st—*bless water, cure light wounds** (2).

*Domain spell. Deity: None. Domains: Healing (cast healing spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning 1/day).

Possessions: *Focusing lens, staff of healing.*

Tactics: If Gorchuk is attacked while tending Damek, he misses with his eye ray and disintegrates a piece of Damek's body, dealing the cleric 5d6 points of damage. Thereafter, he concentrates on self-defense,

using his *charm person, charm monster,* and *fear* rays to deter attacks and his *sleep* and *slow* rays to put attackers out of commission without harming them. He does not use his *finger of death* or *disintegrate* eye rays against the characters unless he is convinced that they will slay him otherwise. Throughout the battle, he demands in Common to know the meaning of the attacks and protests that his patient needs him.

Development: If the characters simply ring the doorbell, Gorchuk opens the door with his *telekinesis* ray and asks them to wait until he finishes with his patient. Once he has removed all the slime from Damek's flesh, he uses *cure serious wounds* from his staff. When the patient awakens, the beholder checks him over and sends him off for some bedrest in another room.

If the PCs call Damek by name, he registers no recognition of it. Gorchuk mildly informs them that no one here recalls names or faces from the past, and that if they are friends of this man, they must reinstate that friendship on new terms once they have all settled in Oblivion. Gorchuk can describe the effects of the water from the spring if asked, as well as the situation with the juggernaut.

Damek refuses to leave Oblivion, insisting that his former life must have been unbearable if he came here to be rid of it, and he has no intention of going back to it. If the PCs attempt to remove him by force, he fights back as best he can. (Though he is unarmed, he still has spells.) Gorchuk also joins in the fight, using nonlethal eye rays as described above. If Damek and Gorchuk together seem to be losing the battle, Gorchuk opens a door or window with *telekinesis* and shouts for aid, bringing the rest of the townsfolk and the lillends over the course of the next 1d6 rounds.

If the PCs explain to Damek that he may not have come here to be rid of his past life, and that he may in fact be a victim of a pixie prank, a successful Diplomacy check raises enough doubt in his mind that he agrees to talk the matter over with the lillends.

Once he realizes that the PCs have not come here to forget their pasts, or that they intend to remove Damek from the town, Gorchuk becomes flustered and insists that they see the Ladies, since no one who enters here is permitted to leave, lest the secret of the valley be revealed. Gorchuk or anyone else in town can direct the PCs to the lillends.

Treasure: Besides Gorchuk's *focusing lens* and his *staff of healing,* he has 3,000 gp worth of gems buried beneath a loose tile (Search DC 23) in the floor of his house.

Focusing Lens: This item was created by and for beholders to improve their accuracy with an eye ray. It looks like a convex lens mounted in a circular frame that fits around the creature's body. An adjustable metal arm holds the lens itself. The *focusing lens* grants its wearer a +3 bonus on ranged attack rolls with the affected eye ray.

When used with a beholder's *disintegrate* eyestalk, the lens allows the beholder to wield the ray either normally or as a precision cutting tool.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, beholder, *greater magic weapon, stone shape*; *Market Price:* 9,000 gp; *Weight:* 5 lb.

4B. THE LADIES (EL 11)

The lillends of Oblivion serve as the town's ruling body, constabulary, treasurers, and recruitment officers. It is they who send dreams detailing the path to Oblivion to those who long for its peace. And it is they who make the laws of the town and ensure its safety and continued secrecy. The townsfolk refer to the lillends as the Ladies.

If the characters go to see the lillends on the advice of their new acquaintances, use this encounter as written. If they draw the attention of the Ladies through causing trouble in town (such as trying to remove Damek or initiating combat), the lillends come to them instead.

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters approach the lillends' manor, adjusting as needed if the lillends initiate contact elsewhere.

> This two-story house with a thatched roof is the only one in town that is lavishly decorated on the exterior. Painted designs of flowers, vines, and birds cover all the walls, and the designs are so lifelike that the leaves almost seem to be fluttering in the wind. A female pixie hovers near the roof, touching up a design with a tiny paintbrush. "Go on in," she says upon seeing you. "They never keep it locked."

The pixie is one of several beings in town who are artists beyond compare. The Ladies encourage artistic and musical talent, and it blossoms freely among Oblivion's populace. Continue with the following if the characters go inside.

Inside, the house consists of a single vaulted chamber covered with art. Mosaics in fantastic designs glitter on the floor, and the walls are painted with murals depicting wilderness scenes. In the middle of the room is an immense crystal ball supported by a three-legged silver stand. Four intricately carved stone columns about 5 feet high serve as chairs for four indescribably beautiful creatures. Their upper bodies resemble those of human women, but their lower bodies look like multicolored serpents. Each has a huge pair of green-and-blue patterned wings sprouting from her back. These four creatures sit with their lower bodies coiled around the columns. A harp lies on the floor near each pedestal, within reach of the occupant's tail. "Welcome to Oblivion, strangers," says one in a voice as mellow as honey. "What is your desire?"

Creatures: The lillends are Marsa, Ediel, Dileena, and Shofila. They adopted this hidden valley as their protectorate centuries ago. Upon discovering the spring of Lethe, they hit upon the idea of establishing a haven for those with weary hearts. They use their *crystal ball* to scan the world for discontented creatures, particularly in evil societies. When they find a likely prospect, they use their *dreamstone* (see below) to send that creature a dream in which the path to Oblivion is outlined. Sometimes they accompany the effect with a *geas* sent via their *crystal ball*.

Lillends (4): hp 40, 42, 45, 19; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: If attacked, two of the lillends immediately pick up their harps and begin bardic music effects while another calls for aid and the fourth uses her spells to charm and beguile the PCs. Gorchuk and Torvek (if still alive) arrive within 1d6 rounds, and the rest of the townsfolk surround the house, attacking any PCs who try to leave. The beholder and the troll do not attack unless the Ladies are in physical danger; if the lillends have successfully charmed or otherwise controlled the PCs, Gorchuk and Torvek do not interfere. If forced into melee, the lillends defend themselves with their swords and spells.

Development: If the characters say they are here to take Damek back to civilization, the lillends initially refuse if they still believe the access road to be hidden. They explain that Damek came here to escape his troubles and has taken the water from the fountain to do so. (This isn't actually true; his amnesia is the result of pixie arrows, not the fountain. But the Ladies don't know that.) Furthermore, the secrecy of this town is its only protection, and they do not intend to have it compromised by allowing people who have been here to leave—at least with their memories intact. If they explain that Damek may not have come here to escape his past at all, they are sympathetic but require further proof—in the form of the pixies who attacked him. (None of the lillends recall drawing him to Oblivion, but they would prefer to have this proof to ensure that they themselves hadn't forgotten something or that some other power hadn't drawn him in to drink.)

If the characters mention that the town's secrecy has already been compromised (or if the lillends have already received that information from Torvek or Gorchuk), they are willing to negotiate. If the characters agree to neutralize the juggernaut, either by destroying it or by caging it again, and if Damek agrees to have his memory restored, they may take the cleric and go—but only if all of them agree to have the memory of Oblivion and their time here erased. If pressed, they also offer a reward of 2,000 gp for this service. The juggernaut, of course, must be dealt with first, and the lillends intend to watch the PCs through their *crystal ball* to ensure that the task is performed adequately.

Damek is willing to accompany the heroes to fight the juggernaut if requested. Gorchuk refuses, saying he has patients to treat. The lillends insist that they must deal with restoring the secrecy of the access road, and they need Torvek to help with that, so he also refuses to accompany them.

Treasure: *Dreamstone, crystal ball,* 8,000 gp.

Dreamstone: This device resembles an hourglass made of a single smoky crystal held in a decorative wrought-iron frame.

Once per day, the *dreamstone*'s possessor can command the device to produce an effect identical to that of the *dream* spell.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *dream*; *Market Price:* 16,200 gp; *Weight:* 5 lb.

5. THE JUGGERNAUT (EL 11)

The juggernaut is tearing up the wilderness on the other side of the valley when the PCs reach Oblivion. If they go to meet it within 24 hours of their arrival in town, they find it mowing down trees along a wooded slope. If they wait any longer, it heads directly for Oblivion. In that case, the PCs can move out to intercept it about 500 yards from the town border.

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs catch sight of the juggernaut, adjusting as needed to fit the circumstances.

The crashing has grown louder as you have moved along the various game trails outside Oblivion. Trees lie broken and crushed in straight-line paths that crisscross the valley. A huge oak falls to the ground some 100 yards ahead of you, revealing a monstrous creature. Square and blocky, this stone behemoth has a carved face in its front panel that bears an expression of sheer rage. Six stone arms, three to a side, flank the creature's body, and these arms grasp trees and animals and thrust them under the giant rollers on which it moves. Stone points and prongs jut from its body on all sides.

Creatures: This monstrosity is the juggernaut, a stone construct built eons ago by an evil wizard intent on wiping out all civilization in the mountains. Recently released from its long confinement in the mountaintop, it has been staging regular assaults on the valley for some days. The juggernaut has patches of green slime on its underside and here and there on its fists as a result of its long confinement in the mountain. Any successful slam or squash attack has a 20% chance of infecting the victim with green slime.

Juggernaut: CR 11; Huge construct; HD 18d10; hp 99; Init –4; Spd 10 ft.; AC 29, touch 4, flat-footed 29; Atk +21 melee (2d6+10 plus 20% chance of green slime, 6 slams); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.; SA improved grab, spell-like abilities, squash 10d10+20 plus 20% chance of green slime; SQ all-around vision, construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 10, immunities (acid, electricity, fire); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 31, Dex 3, Con —, Int —, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Hide –12, Search +4, Spot +6.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the juggernaut hits an opponent that is at least one size category smaller than itself with a slam attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +31). If it gets a hold, it can attempt to thrust the opponent under its rollers in the next round, dealing automatic squash damage. Alternatively, the juggernaut has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its hand to hold the opponent (–20 penalty on grapple check, but the juggernaut is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals slam damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*forcecage, grease, hold monster, magic missile, slow, wall of force, web.* Caster level 18th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Squash (Ex): As a standard action during its turn each round, a juggernaut can literally roll over opponents at least one size category smaller than itself. This attack deals 10d10+20 points of bludgeoning damage. A squashed opponent can attempt either an attack of opportunity at a –4 penalty or a Reflex save (DC 29) for half damage. A successful saving throw indicates that the target has been pushed back or aside (target's choice) as the juggernaut moves forward. A squashed target furthermore has a 20% chance of becoming infected with green slime.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A juggernaut can see in all directions at once. Because of this ability, it gains a +4 bonus on Search and Spot checks, and it cannot be flanked.

Construct Traits: A juggernaut is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep,* paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. The creature is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. It cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Fast Healing (Ex): A juggernaut regains lost hit points at the rate of 10 per round. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow the juggernaut to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

Tactics: Though unintelligent, the juggernaut is canny. Its primary strategy is to roll over foes and crush them. It uses its six arms to grab flying creatures and other enemies that are not directly in its path and thrust them under its rollers. If it can't seize a target, it uses its *magic missiles* to slay it or its *hold person, slow,* or *web* spell-like abilities to hold it fast until the juggernaut catches up with it and crushes it. It uses its *forcecage* ability to cage any creatures that have avoided its other powers, planning to dismiss the effect and crush its foes before they realize they are free. The juggernaut uses *wall of force* to bridge any chasms or other obstacles to its movement.

Development: The characters can either try to defeat it outright or do what the previous set of adventurers did—lure it into a cage and confine it permanently. If they use the same sort of physical means that their predecessors did, the cage must be constructed in advance, and its walls must be perfectly square to prevent the creature from having leverage against them. It must also be a snug fit, so that the monster can't wear down the walls by constantly moving back and forth to hit them.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the characters defeat the juggernaut, the valley is safe once again. The lillends and the other citizens are grateful and willing to let Damek leave with them if he is willing to have his memory restored. But only the PCs can restore it, by means of a *heal*, *limited wish*, *wish*, or *miracle* spell, because no one in town has access to such magic. (A reminder that the fountain is handy and that he can always drink from it if he doesn't like what he remembers is enough to secure his agreement.)

Once Damek has his memory back, he agrees to go on to Mountain View. The lillends still insist, however, that both Damek and the characters drink a modified version of the water from the spring that will wipe the memory of Oblivion and what they did there from their minds. They will personally accompany the party back to the juncture with the Oring Road and give them the water there. This version of the Lethe water has been modified to erase only the memory of Oblivion, the path to it, and the occurrences there, as per the *modify memory* spell. There is no saving throw against this effect.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Penny Williams joined the roleplaying game industry as Game Questions Expert for TSR, Inc. in the 1980s. Since then, she has served as **RPGA** Network Coordinator, ***Polyhedron*** *Newszine* editor, and Senior Editor and Coordinating Editor for the RPG R&D Department at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Now a busy freelancer, Penny edits for several game companies and runs the online playtesting program for Wizards products. When not enhancing the cruelty of the deaths PCs will suffer at the hands of designers, Penny puts up jam, works jigsaw puzzles, and tutors students in math and science.